

Truck Driver Dies After Falling into Hopper



A truck driver died after trying to fix a tarp that covered the load on his trailer.

The victim was hauling crushed ore to a mining storage facility. The driver loosened the tarp prior to entering the building where his load was to be dumped. A strong wind caught the tarp and rollbar, flipping them over the side of the trailer.

The driver entered the facility and parked next to the hopper system. The hopper led to a series of chutes and conveyor belts. He is thought to have then attempted to fix the tarp by climbing on the top of the load, or outside of the trailer's catwalks. The man fell into the hopper and was found trapped in a chute.

Investigators recommend drivers leave tarps securely fastened until trailers are ready to be unloaded. Workers should also recognize and avoid hazardous situations such as climbing on loads or outside catwalks.

Procedures need to be put in place to predict and remedy problems such as the driver encountered. Employers can include communication skills in safety classes, ensuring others are made aware of how workers intend to solve problems.